

# PRESS RELEASE

21 South Fruit St, Suite 14, Concord, NH 03301 – 603-271-2261 – [www.nh.gov/insurance](http://www.nh.gov/insurance)

## For Immediate Release

## Media Contact:

Catherine Tucker

[Catherine.tucker@doj.nh.gov](mailto:Catherine.tucker@doj.nh.gov)

603-271-7987 Phone

603-223-6289 Fax

## Insurance Commissioner and Attorney General Announce Conviction For Insurance Fraud

**January 9, 2008** - Attorney General Kelly A. Ayotte and Insurance Commissioner Roger A. Sevigny announced today the conviction of Wellington H. Potter for one count of Insurance Fraud stemming from a homeowner's insurance claim made following a house fire.

Potter, age 60, of Jefferson, New Hampshire, pled guilty to one count of Insurance Fraud, under RSA 638:20. Potter was sentenced to six months in the House of Corrections and fined \$42,000. The House of Corrections sentence was suspended for three years, conditioned upon payment of the fine, payment of \$21,039.52 in restitution, a letter of apology to the insurance company and good behavior.

The charges stemmed from a claim submitted to Vermont Mutual Insurance Company for payment for replacement of items damaged in the house fire. The insurance policy required that the items actually be replaced in order to receive the payment, and Potter was aware of this provision. In support of his claim, Potter provided two sets of receipts to Vermont Mutual. These receipts were mailed from Twin Mountain, New Hampshire in the summer and fall of 2006. Many of these purchases had not been made and the purported receipts were fraudulent. As a result of these submissions, Potter was paid over \$21,000 by Vermont Mutual. When questioned by Vermont Mutual, Potter stated that he had made some "clerical mistakes."

The conviction is the result of a joint investigation conducted by the Attorney General's Office and the Insurance Department Fraud Unit. Pursuant to RSA 417:23, the Fraud Unit was formed to investigate Insurance Fraud and other insurance-related criminal activity. A specialized prosecutor is assigned to work with the Fraud Unit. Fraud Unit Investigator Karen L. McCallister conducted the investigation on behalf of the Insurance Department. The case was initially referred by Vermont Mutual to the Fraud Unit, as required by RSA 417:28.

“My fraud investigation team is committed to stopping the crime of Insurance Fraud, and will continue to work with the Attorney General’s office to bring criminals to justice,” said Insurance Commissioner Seigny. Attorney General Ayotte said, “This case is an example of our teamwork with the Insurance Department to seek justice and prevent insurance fraud for the benefit of New Hampshire citizens.”

# # #